

Alabama

College Affordability Profile 2017

What Percentage of Family Income Is Required to Attend College Full Time?

Families in Alabama needed to pay, on average, 16 percent of their income in 2014 to cover educational expenses for a full-time student at public two-year institutions in the state. This was lower than the SREB and national averages.

Families in Alabama needed 30.6 percent of their income to pay for educational expenses for a full-time student at public four-year non-research institutions. This was higher than the SREB and national averages.

	Alabama, 2008	Alabama, 2014	SREB Average, 2014	U.S. Average, 2014
Public Four-Year Category 1	25.0%	42.3%	29.0%	30.1%
Public Four-Year Category 2	22.5%	30.6%	28.1%	27.8%
Public Two-Year	13.0%	16.0%	17.1%	18.5%

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files, Instructional Activity Files and Directory Files, 2008-2014. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2008-2014. Institutional sectors based on categories in the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*. Analysis by SREB consultant.

How Much Is Spent Per Student on Financial Aid?

In Alabama, need-based aid per student was \$26 in 2014. This was much lower than the SREB average and substantially lower than the national average. Based on criteria other than need, the average award per student was \$7 in 2014. This was considerably lower than both the SREB and national averages.

	Alabama, 2004	Alabama, 2007	Alabama, 2014	SREB Average, 2014	U.S. Average, 2014
Need-Based Financial Aid Only	\$5	\$10	\$26	\$363	\$508
Other Financial Aid	\$3	\$10	\$7	\$506	\$218

Sources: National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs 2004, 2007 and 2014 annual surveys. U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Instructional Activity and Directory Files, 2004, 2007 and 2014. Analysis by SREB consultant.

For Families Making Less Than \$30,000, What Percentage of Income Is Required for Tuition at Lowest-Priced Colleges?

Twenty-eight percent of families in Alabama made less than \$30,000 per year in 2014. For these families, the cost of tuition and fees at the lowest-priced public institutions was 20 percent of income in 2014. This was higher than the SREB and national averages.

	2008	2014
Percentage of Families Earning Less than \$30,000 Annually	29%	28%
Tuition and Fees at Lowest-Priced Public Colleges	\$2,068	\$3,300
Average Income of Alabama Families Earning Less than \$30,000 Annually	\$17,133	\$16,704
Percentage of Income Needed for Tuition and Fees at the Lowest-Priced Public Institutions	12%	20%
SREB Average	11%	16%
U.S. Average	14%	18%

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Charges Data Files 2008 and 2013, Instructional Activity Data Files 2008-2014, and Directory Files 2008-2014. American Community Survey Public Use Micro Sample Files 2008-2014. Analysis by SREB consultant.

How Much Do Graduates Borrow?

Graduates from public four-year research universities in Alabama in 2014 typically borrowed \$22,179. This was higher than the SREB and national averages.

	Alabama, 2008	Alabama, 2014	SREB Average, 2014	U.S. Average, 2014
Public Four-Year Category 1	\$14,102	\$22,179	\$21,883	\$21,598
Public Four-Year Category 2	\$15,711	\$24,944	\$22,622	\$20,574

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, College Scorecard. U.S. Department of Education, 2014 and 2015. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Instructional Activity Data Files 2009-2015 and Directory Files 2008-2014.

A Closer Look at Family Ability to Pay

SREB’s Commission on College Affordability defined *affordability* as the relationship of the price required to attend higher education — or the net price — relative to family income.

Net price = tuition and required fees plus room and board, books and other expenses minus grant aid students receive from the federal or state government or the institution.

Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Four-Year Category 1 Institutions, 2014

	Average in This Income Level	Percentage of Families in This Income Level	Net Price	Percentage of Income Needed
Income \$0 - \$30,000	\$16,704	28%	\$15,904	95%
Income \$30,000 - \$48,000	\$38,989	18%	\$17,635	45%
Income \$48,000 - \$75,000	\$60,703	21%	\$20,459	34%
Income \$75,000 - \$110,000	\$91,154	17%	\$22,302	24%
Income \$110,000 and above	\$178,401	16%	\$23,004	13%

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files, Instructional Activity Files and Directory Files, 2008-2014. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2008-2014. Institutional sectors based on categories in the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*. Analysis by SREB consultant.

At public four-year category 1 institutions in Alabama, families making less than \$30,000 in 2014 needed 95 percent of income for educational expenses. Families making between \$30,000 and \$48,000 needed 45 percent of income for a full-time student.

Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Four-Year Category 2 Institutions, 2014

	Average in This Income Level	Percentage of Families in This Income Level	Net Price	Percentage of Income Needed
Income \$0 - \$30,000	\$16,704	28%	\$11,760	70%
Income \$30,000 - \$48,000	\$38,989	18%	\$12,301	32%
Income \$48,000 - \$75,000	\$60,703	21%	\$14,954	25%
Income \$75,000 - \$110,000	\$91,154	17%	\$15,606	17%
Income \$110,000 and above	\$178,401	16%	\$16,532	9%

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files, Instructional Activity Files and Directory Files, 2008-2014. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2008-2014. Institutional sectors based on categories in the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*. Analysis by SREB consultant.

At public four-year category 2 institutions in Alabama, families making less than \$30,000 in 2014 needed 70 percent of income for educational expenses. Families making between \$30,000 and \$48,000 needed 32 percent of income for a full-time student.

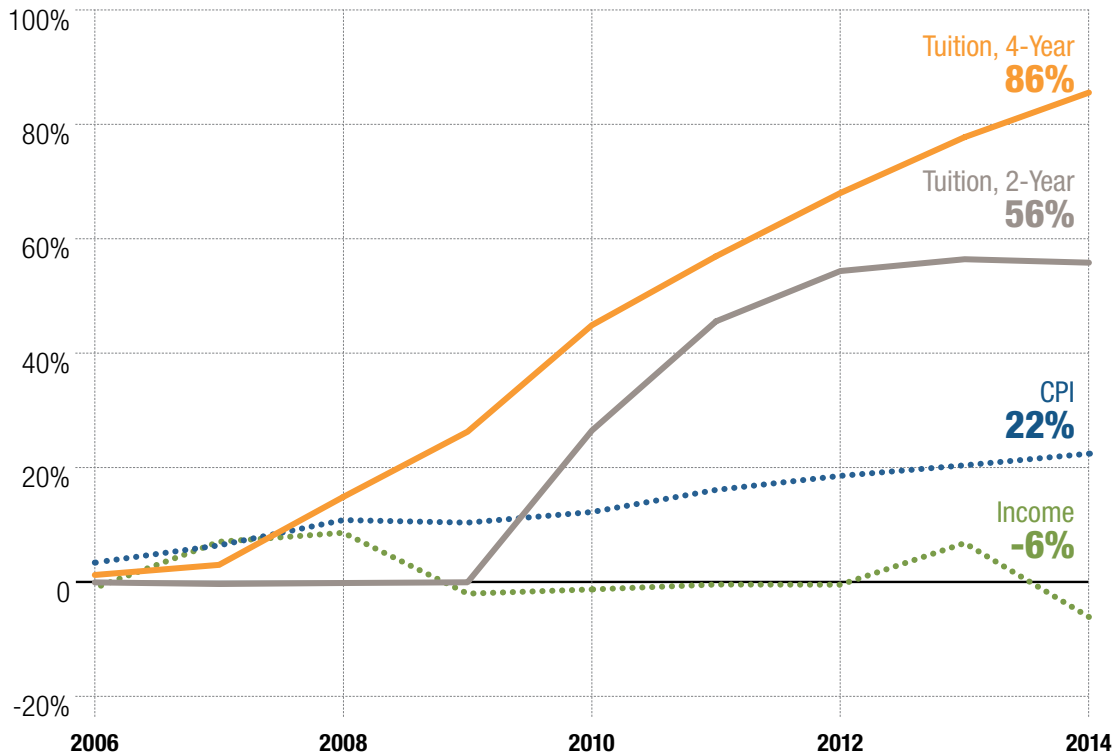
Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Two-Year Institutions, 2014

	Average in This Income Level	Percentage of Families in This Income Level	Net Price	Percentage of Income Needed
Income \$0 - \$30,000	\$16,704	28%	\$5,570	33%
Income \$30,000 - \$48,000	\$38,989	18%	\$6,423	16%
Income \$48,000 - \$75,000	\$60,703	21%	\$8,215	14%
Income \$75,000 - \$110,000	\$91,154	17%	\$10,038	11%
Income \$110,000 and above	\$178,401	16%	\$10,219	6%

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files, Instructional Activity Files and Directory Files, 2008-2014. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2008-2014. Institutional sectors based on categories in the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*. Analysis by SREB consultant.

At public two-year institutions in Alabama, families making less than \$30,000 in 2014 needed 33 percent of income for educational expenses. Families making between \$30,000 and \$48,000 needed 16 percent of income for a full-time student.

Alabama: Changes in Tuition and Fees



Sources: Consumer Price Index: Bureau of Labor Statistics, South urban area, 2015. Tuition and fees: National Center for Education Statistics Digest of Education Statistics, 2017. Median family income: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, South region, Table F-6, 2017.

Additional Context

- The Georgetown Center for the Workforce projects that by 2020, 62 percent of jobs in Alabama will require a postsecondary education, higher than the average for the South (59 percent) and lower than the U.S. average (65 percent).
- In 2015, 24 percent of students in Alabama were enrolled in public four-year category 1 institutions, 36 percent were enrolled at public four-year category 2 institutions and 39 percent were enrolled in public two-year colleges.
- In 2015, 27 percent of children in Alabama were living in poverty. This was up from 2004, when 23 percent were living in poverty.

Sources: Workforce data: Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2015. Enrollment data: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems, 2015. Children in poverty data: Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Book, 2017.

Alabama Institutions by Type

Public Four-Year Category 1

Auburn University
The University of Alabama
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of Alabama in Huntsville

Public Four-Year Category 2

Alabama A & M University
Alabama State University
Athens State University
Auburn University at Montgomery
Jacksonville State University
Marion Military Institute
Troy University
University of Montevallo
University of North Alabama
University of South Alabama
University of West Alabama

Public Two-Year

Alabama Southern Community College
Bevill State Community College
Bishop State Community College
Central Alabama Community College
Chattahoochee Valley Community College

Enterprise State Community College
Gadsden State Community College
George C. Wallace State Community College-Dothan
George C. Wallace State Community College-Selma
James H Faulkner State Community College
Jefferson Davis Community College
Jefferson State Community College
John C Calhoun State Community College
Lawson State Community College-Birmingham Campus
Lurleen B Wallace Community College
Northeast Alabama Community College Northwest-Shoals Community College
Snead State Community College
Shelton State Community College
Southern Union State Community College

Notes

Category 1 four-year institutions award at least 30 doctoral degrees in five different areas. **Category 2** includes all other four-year institutions.

The public two-year group includes institutions that primarily award associates degrees; the list may include two-year institutions that award bachelor's degrees.

These profiles list only institutions that reported data for 2014-15 by March 2017 to the IPEDS Student Financial Aid Data Dictionary.

These profiles do not report data for the technical college sector if a state's technical colleges enroll less than 3 percent of students.

See the technical guide at SREB.org/Affordability for detailed sources and explanatory notes.

SREB College Affordability Profiles detail data and trends specific to each SREB state to assist policymakers with decisions on postsecondary affordability and attainment. For additional resources, including recommendations of the Commission on College Affordability in the South and the SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, visit SREB.org/Affordability.